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But, gee, their two thousand is fine." (Office Holders' Trust rises in unison, with loud applause, shouting, "You sed somthin' then, kid.")

The curtain is rung down in the confusion of an intermission, as the paving bosses, superintendents, overseers, time keepers, meter inspectors, petition extinguishers, foremen, quarry hands, pick and shovel brigade, recall intimidators and boycotters, cart and team drivers, who voted "right," all march upon the stage.

The performance will be concluded by the mayor, who renders in a loud, sanctimonious voice, the old time favorite, "Praise 'Bud' from whom all blessings flow."

Bryan who has thrice been elected president by the straw vote will likely become the Dry Democratic candidate in 1916.

FIRST SURPLUS.

The "first surplus ever produced by the postal department" over which the administration at Washington does considerable cackling, is \$3,600,000. The way it happened to be produced is by refusing to pay the railroads for carrying the parcel post. It was an unfair as well as niggardly and shortsighted policy. Congress will sooner or later provide a square deal for the railroads, which they have not had in the parcel post business, and the surplus will disappear.

"BILLY" SUNDAY.

They are making prodigious preparations for Billy Sunday in corrupt and contented Philadelphia, where he opens a several weeks' revival January 2. More than 150,000 people meet nightly to pray for the services. Two great choruses of 1,800 persons each are organized and in training to lead the singing.

Free freight on Belgium's flour will no longer be allowed by the railroads. It was a generous offer the railroads made to carry flour, not at a specially low rate, but at their own expense entirely. After all, the biggest single contributor to Belgium's relief has been the American railroads.

The President's luck has turned. No matter what the merit of the controversy between Woodrow and his Senate, it is bound to hurt Woodrow. It will weaken him as a Presidential candidate, and it will strip his person of the sanctity with which his admirers have enveloped it.

The Kaiser, we note, has returned to the front. But there's need no concern for his safety. "The front," to a Kaiser, is about 75 miles to the rearward of the line of battle.

YOU MISSED THIS.

Prof. Alex. Tansey addressed his high school class on "How to Be Successful in the Education."

Li'l Lord helps those who help themselves, while the public must take care of the others—Abe Martin.

The West Virginian falling to publish a paper yesterday our readers did not get the opportunity to read the philosophy of "Abe Martin," under his well known likeness, but as we pay Kin Hubbard real money for writing these paragraphs we are going to give yesterday's installment today.

The Buenos Aires Herald is 10c per copy or 25c per year, still some people would like to have 5c papers which sell for 2c at 1 cent per copy.

The numerous local Democrats who had their stockings hung for the post-office job are beginning to have some doubts about the truth of the famous Duna letter to "Virginia."

Fairmont had a "Dry" Christmas, but it seems to have been very successful as well as satisfactory.

"THE LAST STRAW."

The Yost law had quite a depressing effect upon all the breweries of this state, but we were somewhat surprised to learn that it was reaching out as far as Columbus, O., where a \$12,000,000 brewery has just turned its toes to the daisies, giving the West Virginia law as "the last straw." Bring on more straw.

The Salvation Army has opened a free soup house at Connelleville. Another evidence of returning prosperity.

The Fairmont "Hard" Times, the local organ of the New Freedom and defender of the faith, will have to get mines "resumed by the first of the busy if it gets all the factories and year.

THE FIGURES TELL.

44.7 per cent of the Democrats in the House of Representatives voted for the prohibition amendment, while 59.2 per cent of the Republicans voted for it. Which goes to show in which party the dry sentiment predominates.

Current Comment

THE UNITED STATES AND THE WAR.

Prophecies have a peculiar habit of becoming fulfilled. This fact has been especially noticeable since the outbreak of the great struggle in Europe. The alarmists, who, thoughtlessly or with sound reason for their faith, forecast the course of events, have now been justified, and the unexpected has happened.

Conspicuous among the minor prophets is Rear Admiral Kimball of the American Navy League, who, seven months ago stated that the United States had no mercantile marine worthy of the name, and that were Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy to withdraw their ships from trade with

America, the country would have no vessels to carry its inward and outward freight. The possibility of the existence of such a deadlock was not regarded seriously at the time, but the notices issued by Mr. L. J. Keena, U. S. Consul General in Buenos Aires, during the last few days, emphasized the fact that America has awakened to the urgent necessity for a mercantile marine of her own. German shipping no longer provides the States with large volumes of cargo space; French, British and Italian steamers do not ply with the regularity which characterized their movements in previous war days; and, as a result, the import and export trade of the American continent has been, to some extent, disorganized. That such a situation could be allowed to continue for any length of time was inconceivable, had no surprise was occasioned when it was announced that the department of state at Washington had undertaken to provide steamship accommodation for all cargoes for which foreign vessels could not be found.

Necessarily, the news was received with mixed feelings by the British commercial community; however, the subsequent announcement that the United States Consuls at Buenos Aires and Montevideo had convened meetings of American commercial men to discuss means of developing trade with the Southern Continent has had a still further disquieting effect. The gravity of the situation from the point of view of European business men need not be emphasized; it is obvious to all. Most of us realize that while Europe is composed almost entirely of warring nations, the possibilities for commercial development afforded to countries at peace are immense. Fifty years, or more, ago, a general conflagration in Europe could have had no effect on the Western Hemisphere other than a detrimental one; trade and commerce belonged essentially to Europe alone. Today that is all changed. The United States is outside the area of conflict; she is able to survey calmly the spectacle of her trade rivals using the whole of their resources in the furtherance of naval and military campaigns; and, inevitably, she is free to step in and seize the opportunities that her commercial foes are compelled to neglect.

The meetings convened by the American consuls in the capitals of Argentina and Uruguay are but the preliminaries to a great commercial campaign, the success of which appears to be assured. Whether or not the commercial houses of the United States will be able to maintain the place that must necessarily become their during the progress of the European war, is a matter for conjecture; but experience of the virility which has characterized North American commerce, impels one to the conclusion that the business relations of the two Americas are about to be so consolidated that the European nations will not, in the future, occupy in the Southern Continent the pre-eminent position that they have held so long.

To what extent the European war will influence the United States in the direction of establishing a mercantile marine for the carrying of her overseas trade is a point on which it is difficult to dogmatize. The citizens of the Northern Republic are not a nautical race; moreover, the cost of shipbuilding in the States is almost prohibitive. One way out of the difficulty would be to purchase vessels in Europe, but the suggestion that that should be done at the present moment has been received with indignation by the Triple Entente, and, as a matter of fact, there seems to be justification for the objections raised. The outstanding truth today, however, is that the United States can never again allow her commercial operations to become dependent on the maintenance of peace in Europe. At the moment the sole guarantee North America has that her goods shall be carried to and from the distant countries of the earth is that Britain possesses the command of the sea. Were there less disproportion between the strengths of the German and British fleets, overseas trade would be practically at a standstill. For the United States to risk being accented by such a situation in the future would be suicidal. That she is not prepared to take that risk is emphasized by the state department's announcement. Indeed, a nevery hand, there is complete evidence that America is preparing to take a bold lead. Europe's madness is her opportunity.—Buenos Aires Herald.

A GOOD RECORD.

The Ceredo Advance, Col. Tom T. McDougal's able weekly has now entered its thirtieth year under the same management. Editor McDougal has always published a sprightly newspaper and covered his field well. He has kept the paper always rigidly in the Republican column and has observed the gradual decline of the Democratic majority in Wayne County until it is now only a few hundred in presidential years and often reaches the vanishing point on county offices, for all of which the Advance is very largely entitled to credit. If any county in the state is under obligations to the Republican party it is Wayne county where the corporations under the Dawson tax laws pay half of the taxes, reducing the taxes of the farmer about one-half.

Just Smiles

"On the Hog."

A Fairmont boy who became stranded in a distant city wrote home as follows:
Dear Father: Send ten, I'm "on the hog."
The reply.
Dear Son: Ride it home, we need the meat.—Father.

OPPORTUNITY.

Master of human destinies am I,
Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and, passing by
Hovel, and mart, and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake! If feasting, rise before I turn away.
It is the hour of Fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore,
I answer not, and I return no more.
—John J. Ingalls.

STAGE IRISHMAN.

The stage Irishman, a vulgar caricature of the son of Erin, is almost as old as the British drama, but the first example of high class Irish melodrama was supplied by the gifted dramatist and actor, Dionysius Lardner Boucicault. He was born in Dublin ninety-two years ago today, Dec. 26, 1822, and was educated at London University. He early developed a genius for the drama, and at the age of eighteen produced "London Assurance" at Covent Garden. This work ranks as a classic, although the creation of an immature youth. In 1852 he made his first appearance as an actor, and the following year visited America with his wife, Agnes Robinson. In 1860 he produced "The Colleen Bawn," an Irish melodrama which marked the beginning of a new dramatic era in the stage treatment of Irishmen. This was followed by "The Shaughraun" and other plays of the same type. Boucicault's American career was successful, and he won fame as dramatist, actor and manager. He wrote and adapted over 400 plays. Boucicault died in 1890.

State Editors

HODGES' BOOM LAUNCHED.

The expected has come—though we didn't expect it so soon!—In the launching of the Hodges' boom for the Democratic nomination for Governor in 1916. The Fairmont Times has been utilized as the vessel of fair augury through which the news is broken to the faithful. The Times prefaces its statement by expressing the opinion that, had Hodges been the Democratic nominee for Governor in 1908 or 1912, he would have been elected and proceeds to make it known that the mistakes of 1908 and 1912 will not be repeated, but that the party workers throughout the state will enlist the Morgantown man without ado early in 1916, and that the only means of escape will lie in absolute declination of the honor, after it has been handed to him.

Whether Colonel Hodges will permit the political scoundrels responsible for his first disaster to lead him in the way of another, remains to be seen. It is well known that he was promised the gubernatorial nomination in 1916 when he undertook the forlorn struggle against Howard Sutherland a few months ago, and it is also known that the ruling ambition of his life pointed to the gubernatorial chair of his native state.

The result of the election of 1914, the triumph of Mr. Sutherland over the Democratic knight errant, ought to prove sufficient warning. However, if hope is so abiding and desire so strong that the big educator needs make another fling at politics, the Republicans will be ready, and stranger things have happened than that the man who so gloriously trimmed his sails in the preliminary affair of 1914 should reef them in 1916.
—Huntington Herald-Dispatch.

DIFFERENCE?

Dearly beloved Clarksburg Telegram, do you know the difference between an editor and a managing editor, or do big papers in small towns, like yours and the Fairmont West Virginian's, not have both?—Parkersburg State Journal.

O. K.

The Fairmont West Virginian is all right, new head and all.—Parkersburg State Journal.

Best Stories.

Instructing the "Cub."
When Fred Haskell was city editor of the Arkansas Gazette a cub reporter turned in a "story" that ran like this: "Buck Seymour was seen with a two inch auger going down the river road this morning. Wonder what Buck is after now?"

"Here, young man," called out the city editor, "this story is incomplete. We don't print that kind of items in the Gazette. Tell what Buck was doing with the auger."

"I-I didn't find out," the cub stammered.

"Well, I'll tell you this one time. Plainly, he was going after grease fish. You catch 'em by boring a hole in the water and baiting the surface with dried prunes. The grease fish comes out, eats the prunes and swells up so he can't get back in the hole."
—New York Mail.

Presumably.

"Parrots come from South America, don't they?"

"I believe so."

"Then what land does the raven come from?"

"Why, from Poeland."—Baltimore American.

Kitchen Repartee.

Mrs. Brown was in the kitchen helping Nora, the cook, prepare supper.

"It's an old saying," she remarked to Nora, "that too many cooks spoil the broth, what do you think?"

"Sure man," she replied, "there's nothing to worry about—there's only one cook here."—National Monthly.

Luke McLuke

(From Cincinnati Enquirer.)

Every husband has two sets of rules—one for himself and one for his wife.

A man doesn't mind being kept up with the early bird if there is plenty to drink on the side and a taxi waiting at the door.

In making things go as far as possible these days a man is often compelled to even stretch the truth.

All sensible women should sit down on the movement to revive the bustle.

Some of the Prodigal Sons who display their silk socks by hoisting their pants half way to the knee when they sit down in a street car, sure look as though they needed fatted calves.

A woman has more sense than a man in some things. You can bet that if she had the ballot she would know what she was voting for or she wouldn't vote.

Truth may be stranger than fiction, but you can't get 10 cents a word for it.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.

The fifteenth Duke of Norfolk, who is the premier duke and the premier earl of Great Britain, the leading Roman Catholic layman of England and one of the wealthiest of Britons, will be sixty-seven years old on Sunday. The duke is the holder of many other titles, some of them among the oldest of the kingdom. The duchy of Norfolk is the oldest existing title of that rank, and the same is true of the earldom of Arundel, which dates from 1139. The duke is also Baron Maltrevere, a title created in 1130; Earl of Surrey, 1483; Baron Fitz-Alan, Clun and Oswaldestre, 1627, and Earl of Norfolk, 1644. The title of Duke of Norfolk was created in 1483. Among his ancestors were several famous warriors on sea and land. The fourth Duke of Norfolk was an adherent of Mary of Scots and was beheaded, and his son died in prison in the Tower of London. The title and estates were confiscated, but were restored in 1664. The Duke of Norfolk is also hereditary marshal and chief butler of England. Like his ancestors, he is a fervent adherent of Catholicism. He has served as Lord Mayor of Sheffield, special envoy to the Pope, and Postmaster General in Lord Salisbury's cabinet. He served in South Africa during the war with the Boers. The duke's first wife died in 1887, leaving an only child, a son, who died in 1892. After seventeen years of widowhood the duke married his cousin, a daughter of Baron Harries, who also comes of a prominent Catholic family, and who is now the thirteenth Baroness Harries in her own right. The duchess, who is thirty years the junior of her husband, has given birth to four children since her marriage in 1904. Three are daughters, the last having been born less than two months ago. The Duke's only son and heir to his ancient title and vast estates is known as the Earl of Arundel and was born in May, 1908. Two daughters were born before the arrival of the male heir, at which the whole country of Norfolk went wild with joy. The duke's heir is guarded like a prince, and, indeed, his father's title stands next to royalty in rank. He has his own private apartments and a corps of nurses, servants and a physician. The estates of the Duke of Norfolk include about 50,000 acres of land, with three magnificent castles and a town house in London. Although his fortune is great, the Duke of Norfolk is not possessed of as much wealth as three other dukes, those of Westminster, Devonshire and Portland, who are said to practically own London.

TODAY WE CELEBRATE.

MANY QUAINT CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH BOXING DAY.

In the calendar of the church today is the festival of St. Stephen, the proto-martyr. As the first of the myriad martyrs of Christianity, Stephen was accorded the honor of having his day placed in the calendar immediately following the nativity. In England the day has been marked by many quaint customs, and it is still observed as "boxing day," when gratuities are distributed among servants, clerks and laborers of all sorts. On the 26th day of December all the claimants of Christmas boxes make their rounds, hence the popular designation of "boxing day." The observance of "boxing day" has died out in America, and those who serve their more fortunate fellows expect their gifts before and not after Christmas.

Every merchant in England is expected to contribute to the Christmas boxes of the servants of his customers, but it is likely that the gratuities this year will be much smaller than in more prosperous and peaceful times. While the "boxing day" custom is not nearly so general as in past times, it is still far from extinct.

In some sections of England St. Stephen's Day was observed by the practice of "going a-Stephening," but this ceremony, happily for the victims, is now all but forgotten. The poor inhabitants of the parish made it a point on this day to call at the rectory where the rector was expected to provide all the bread, cheese and ale they could consume. This gentle custom was usually productive of a drunken orgy, for few of the men could resist the temptation to stop drinking the ale so freely provided until they were unable to hold another drop. This custom was finally abolished early in the nineteenth century.

Another curious idea in connection with St. Stephen's Day is that the

Christmas Will Soon Be Here.

Christmas will soon be here. Why not buy an useful present? You will be able to find them in our line of Gents Wearing Apparel. Pay us a visit before buying. OPEN OF EVENINGS.

R. GIL